

## Message Text

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43

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01

/057 W

----- 066099

R 010632Z OCT 75

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7244

INFO USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

FBIS OKINAWA

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 11610

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PGOV CH

SUBJECT: NATIONAL DAY LEADERSHIP TURNOUT: WANG AND CHOU

ABSENT FROM PEKING

1. THE TURNOUT OF PEKING POLITBURO LEADERS FOR THE TRADITIONAL NATIONAL DAY BANQUET WAS MARKED BY THE ABSENCE OF AILING PREMIER CHOU EN-LAI AND PARTY NUMBER THREE WANG HUNG-WEN. ALSO AMONG THE MISSING WAS POLITBURO ALTERNATE NI CHIH-FU WHO HAS NOT MADE ANY PUBLIC APPEARANCES SINCE MID-MAY, AND THE POLITBURO'S CHRONIC INVALIDS KANG SHEN AND LIU PO-CHENG.

2. CHOU'S ABSENCE--PARTICULARLY FOLLOWING THE REVELATIONS DURING THE HEATH VISIT THAT A MEETING WITH CHOU HAD BEEN SCHEDULED AND THEN CANCELED AND HIS FAILURE TO MEET WITH LE DUAN-IS STRONGLY EVIDENCE THAT THE PREMIER'S HEALTH HAS RECENTLY ALTHOUGH PERHAPS TEMPORARILY, WORSENEDED.

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ONE QUALIFIER ON HIS HEALTH SHOULD BE ADDED. CHOU'S

WIFE, TENG YING-CHAO DID ATTEND THE BANQUET THUS  
LESSENING CONCERN OVER THE SERIOUSNESS OF HIS CURRENT CONDITION  
CHOU HAS TRADITIONALLY ATTENDED THESE BANQUETS AND EVEN IN  
THE WAKE OF THE LIN PIAO AFFAIR WHEN ONLY A FEW LEADERS  
APPEARED, CHOU HEADED THE TURNOUT. DURING LAST YEAR'S  
BANQUET, THE PREMIER ATTENDED AND SPOKE A FEW WORDS, A  
TASK AT THIS TIME WHICH WAS PERHAPS REGARDED AS TOO  
TIRING FOR THE SEVENTY-SIX YEAR OLD CHOU. AFP (SEPTEMBER  
30) REPORTS "CHINESE SOURCES" STATING THAT CHOU WAS UNDER-  
GOING MEDICAL TREATMENT.

3. WANG HUNG-WEN'S ABSENCE FROM THE PEKING CELEBRATION  
MAY BE EVEN MORE SIGNIFICANT THAN CHOU'S WITH NO  
INFORMATION YET IN ON THE CELEBRATION IN SHANGHAI  
IT IS OF COURSE CONCEIVABLE THAT WANG WILL TURN UP THERE  
AS HE DID ON ARMY DAY (HK 8868) HOWEVER HIS CONSISTANT  
NON-APPARENCE WITH THE GROUP LEADERSHIP TURNOUTS IN  
PEKING OVER THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS RAISES A  
QUESTION ABOUT HIS RELATIONS WITH OTHER MEMBERS OF THE  
LEADERSHIP. EVEN IF WANG WERE TO BE PREFORMING SOME  
SPECIAL DUTIES IN SHANGHAI OR EAST CHINA, IT WOULD NOT  
BE DIFFICULT TO RETURN BREIFLY TO PEKING FOR ONE OF  
THESE MANY LEADERSHIP GATHERINGS.  
CROSS

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